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M.I.2. 28 MAY 1946 WAR DEPARTMENT MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

(SSU China Note:
(Sub-source who is considered fairly reliable is a hotel manager in Harbin, who left Mukden 4 October 1945 and arrived in Harbin 6 October 1945, where he stayed until 12 March 1946. He intends to return to Harbin soon.)

1. Sub-source states that Russian forces acted as badly in Harbin as they did in Mukden, that looting, raping, and shooting at night was very common. Economically Harbin is comparatively comfortable since the food supply is excellent but expensive according to Manchurian standards. In terms of the U.S. dollar the cost of living in Harbin is about half that of Peiping.

2. The White Russians run the gamut of reactions to the Soviet Army and its personnel. Some irreconcilables fear and detest them but dare not state so because of the presence of the NKVD which openly takes punitive measures against all outspoken critics of the Soviet Army. Punishment varies from confiscation of personal property and real estate, to a trip to Siberia and subsequent execution. The majority of the White Russians like them to a degree but all White Russian groups fear them.

3. The Chinese hate and fear the Soviet Army. They are furious at their conduct and plundering. They are hiding many Japanese from the Russians and state that they wish the Japanese were in control again. Since they are helpless against the overwhelming forces of the Soviet Army, they manufacture a vodka from wood alcohol which they purposely sell cheaply to the Soviet soldiers, which blinds and kills many of them. This, plus making sure that all the geishas and Chinese prostitutes are infected with a venereal disease to transmit to the Russians is all they can do. Russian medical officers state that they cannot begin to control the problem consequently, venereal disease is spreading rapidly among the troops.

4. The Japanese are in a horrible state, craven, helpless and poor in the extreme. They sell what has not been looted from them for money with which to buy food. Their Chinese friends do what they can to help them. Many White Russians led Soviet soldiers to the homes of the wealthier Chinese most of which have been thoroughly pillaged.

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5. The Soviets will abide no criticism and have excuses for everything they are doing. Currently they are buying a great deal of real estate for the Russian government, both from Chinese and White Russians. It was sub-source's belief that they were attempting, and with success, to purchase as much property as possible in north Manchuria to justify continued occupation to protect Soviet interests.

6. Sub-source was either unable or unwilling to commit himself regarding order of battle. He did state that the Soviet Army had artillery, infantry, a number of tanks, tank destroyers, etc., and added that in December 1945 a parade was held of all the troops in the city and adjacent areas and that there were many thousands of them. The commanding general of Russian forces in October 1945 was General Swartzkov, who was succeeded by General Kusnakov. The reason given for the removal of General Swartzkov was that he was a poor disciplinarian. However, with the new appointment there was no improvement in the behavior of the troops. General Kusnakov was dismissed for the same reason. Under the new General things have calmed down a little and troops are being punished for such overt acts as murder and stealing.

7. Sub-source absolutely refused to commit himself on what the Russians had done with the Japanese and stated only that all Japanese in Harbin at the time of the surrender are still there. This statement which does not agree with those of other informants, cannot be considered factual.

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